

**Grade 3 Informational - Process Writing Project**  
**Hamsters**  
**Feedback for Improvement**

**Topic: Hamsters**

**Main Idea #1:** What do they look like?

**Main Idea #2:** Feeding

**Main Idea #3:** Why do you need to clean a hamster?

**Main Idea #4:** Playing

**What worked:**

- **Organization:** The student has a clear organizational plan for this piece. The piece was written over the course of several days with time for edits and revisions.
- **Main Idea/Reasons:** The main ideas are reflected in the Table of Contents. Then, each main idea is presented on a separate page. This keeps the student focused on just one main idea at a time. They are broad yet distinct from one another which allows the student to sort and categorize the information.
- **Elaboration:** The student has some knowledge of the detail generating questions but is not fully applying them to the details. The student used the detail generating questions: “What does it look like? and Why is it important?” most effectively in the main idea paragraph: Why do you need to clean a hamster?
- **Introduction:** A question was used for the lead-*How do you take care of a hamster?* This is an effective way to hook the reader in, however the rest of the intro is general in nature with no topic sentence.

**Feedback with Prescriptive Lesson:**

**CHOOSE a Focus Skill:** What skill will make the biggest impact for this writer?

**Main Ideas Sentences:** The headings on the page seem to stand in for the main idea sentences in most paragraphs. There are two questions that could be inferred to be main idea sentences. This student will benefit from instruction in writing a main idea sentence.

- **Section 2 Lesson 10** Alternatives to Boring, Redundant Main Idea/Reason Sentences
- **Section 2 Lesson 11** Revising Boring, Redundant Main Idea Sentences
- **Section 2 Lesson 15** Word Referents - alleviate the use of the word “hamster”

**Elaboration:** Learning to use the productive questions to elaborate details: “What does it look like? Why is it important?” will greatly improve the overall quality of this piece. In several

paragraphs the author uses “What does it look like?” but doesn’t go on to explain why it’s important. Instruction in this section will greatly improve the writing.

- **Section 3 Lessons 1-11**

**Introductions:** This piece needs a strong lead and an effective topic sentence that names the specific main ideas in the author’s prewriting plan.

- **Section 5 Lesson 1** Identifying Different Types of Leads and Recognizing Topic Sentences
- **Section 5 Lesson 2** Recognizing Main Ideas/Main Reasons in Topic Sentences
- **Section 5 Lesson 3** Writing an Effective Lead Using a Question
- **Section 5 Lesson 4** Writing an Effective Lead Using Three Techniques

**Conclusions:** This student needs to write a strong conclusion paragraph that includes a restatement of the topic and main ideas using word variety to remind the reader what they learned in this informative piece.

- **Section 5 Lesson 8** Recognizing Definitive Language for Strong Conclusions
- **Section 5 Lesson 9** Writing Conclusions

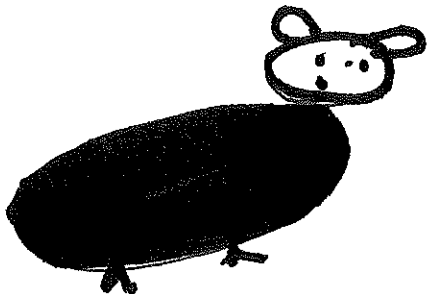
**Grammar and Mechanics:** The writing had several grammar mistakes. **Lessons from Editing, Revising and More for Grade 3** would be a great tool for addressing some of the grammatical errors.

This student understands the purpose for writing information. There is a clear organization to the writing, the main ideas are distinct from one another and can certainly umbrella a number of details. Once this student learns to elaborate fully on the details, this writer will easily pick up on writing an effective introduction and conclusion.

How to take

care of

your hamster



# Hamsters



## Table of Contents

Introduction

What do they look like?

Feeding

Why do you need to clean a hamster?

Playing

*Your main ideas  
are distinct from  
one another!*

## Introduction

Lead-question  
You have the reader  
wondering - so they'll  
read on!

How do you take care of a hamster? A hamster is an easy thing to take care of. Like bathing or feeding. It is very easy once you read this book.

You need to work on writing a topic sentence that names the main ideas so the reader knows what they'll be learning about.



The word "hamster" is used quite a lot in this "book." Can you think of any word referents to use instead?

### Adjectives

small  
fluffy  
adorable  
pint-sized  
playful

### Nouns

animal  
creature  
pet  
companion  
mammal

I like how the  
-Main Idea is  
stated as a question.

What do they look like?

They look like the softest blanket in the world.

Hamsters can be white tan brown or black, they can be big or small. Their eyes are like big bouncy balls. Their whiskers feel like flexible sticks. Their tail looks like a little toe on their bottoms. Their feet feel like little bear claws ,they have little feet like hen but much smaller. Their teeth look like mini chopsticks and they are for munching up their food.

This is descriptive-  
but I wonder why is this important?

what does it look like?  
why is it important?

↓  
You answered the detail generating questions effectively in this sentence.

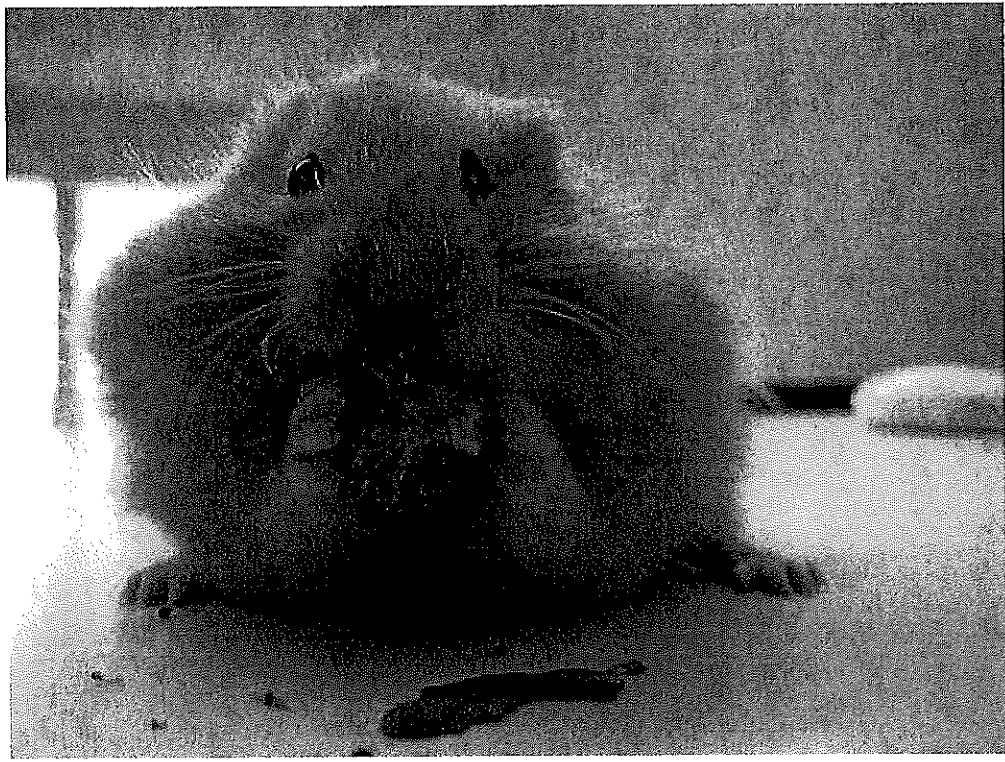


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Feeding - <sup>Heading</sup> Can you write a main idea sentence for this paragraph?  
Use one of the sentence starters below.

Hamsters will eat fruits, berries, vegetables, and the normal hamster food from the store. If you pet a hamster while they are eating they will snap at you. Hamsters eat with their paws and then nibble down. Sometimes they store their food in their cheek pouches. What does it look like when they store food in their cheek pouches? Why do they do that?

Why?



Possible Sentence Starters:

These small creatures need \_\_\_\_\_.

How do you \_\_\_\_\_?

It is interesting to learn \_\_\_\_\_.

Did you know \_\_\_\_\_?

Why do you need to clean a hamster?

Good job writing a  
Main Idea Sentence  
Started as a question.

You need to clean hamsters because hamsters can get very stinky, they can get as stinky as a skunk. Make sure the container is tall so the hamster doesn't get out. You need to first put the soap on them and then you wash them with warm running water. Watch out for their eyes!! Once the hamster is clean then you need to clean the cage. Take out everything like the wheel, climbing tube if they have one, the feeding bowl, and the bedding. Take the top part off and put the bottom part aside. Once you do that you need to get some dish soap and scrub all around the cylinders. Clean out the bottom and scrub out the poo. If they don't have any food they will eat their poo if you don't clean it well. They won't care. Make sure to clean the food bowl so the food is nice and clean. When everything is all clean put the cage back together, add clean shavings and new bedding. Be sure to put the hamster back in the cage and snap down the top so the hamster doesn't get out.

You used  
the detail  
generating  
questions  
here! Nice  
work! 😊

You answered  
the  
Detail  
Generating  
Questions!



## Playing

Why do you need to play with your hamster?

- Main Idea  
Stated as a  
question -  
can you think  
of  
another  
way to  
write a  
main idea  
sentence?

Make sure you play very gently. One time my sister squeezed my hamster so tight my hamster bit her she dropped him and she broke his ribs .So we had to take him to the vet right away . The vet said I will give him a shot but it will hurt him very bad since Hammy was only 3 months old .Hamsters like to go through peoples fingers .They could roll in their balls all day long .Their favorite thing to do is to roll in their wheels.

what does  
that look  
like?



Possible Sentence Starters:

The best part is \_\_\_\_\_.

Every hamster needs \_\_\_\_\_.

As a pet owner you should \_\_\_\_\_.

I like the anecdote here! You know a lot about this topic!